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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 26, 2005

1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for January 26, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

2. RADIKAL / CUMHURIYET / MILLI GAZETE: Feyzullah Arslan, Security Director of Gaziantep, previously appealed to the Administrative Court regarding the "demotion" he had been subjected to through his latest appointment as Security Director of Gaziantep. Arslan has recently regained the right to his former title as the Deputy Security Director and Spokesman of the Chief Security Directorate in Ankara, and has now been returned to his former office.

3. OZGUR GUNDEM: Twenty-four people detained in yesterday's uprising in Siirt were released after their statements were taken. Six of the detainees were sentenced in Siirt's (E-Type) Prison and they will be subject to subsequent litigation on the grounds that they "damaged public property and showed resistance to the police officers." The families of the two female (alleged) terrorists claim they were killed extrajudicially; their dead bodies were forcibly seized by the soldiers from them and the burial procedures were conducted without the families' consent, and without observing burial rites and practices.

4. EVRENSEL: Yusuf Alatas, Chairperson of the Human Rights Association, called on the Turkish Parliament to take action against the killing of five people during the operation conducted in Sirnak on January 20. Alatas claimed that the soldiers could have caught the five people that were killed alive. Alatas also claimed that the families of the people killed have the right to know in detail why and how their children were killed. Alatas, critical of the way the burial procedures of the dead were conducted, claimed that the public officers (involved in the incident) should be held accountable for the way they handled the burial procedures.

5. MILLI GAZETE / MILLIYET / SABAH: Twenty-four people were wounded and two people died during the eight earthquakes that hit Hakkari yesterday. The quake with the highest magnitude measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale caused great panic in the province. Another quake, which shook Adana with a moderate magnitude of 4.1 on the Richter scale, caused no damage or loss of lives.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

1. RADIKAL / MILLI GAZETE / YENI SAFAK: In order to remove the strain of electricity debts farmers incurred through irrigation, PM Erdogan had introduced the payment-by-installments method on January 18. However, Sami Guclu, Minister of Agriculture, announced today that they are trying to find additional resources to fund the other agricultural subsidies (such as the tax reductions on agricultural inputs like fertilizers and diesel oil) announced by the PM.

2. SABAH (GUNEY) / EKSPRES / MILLIYET / HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / EVRENSEL / BOLGE / VAKIT / : Angry producers and farmers held a demonstration to protest the GoT's lack of incentive policies to boost Turkey's citrus fruit exports. The demonstrators complained about the inadequacy of governmental subsidies, as well. During the demonstration, in Hadirli village of Adana, as citrus fruit producers and the farmers threw parcels of fruit on the ground and stepped on them, they shouted slogans calling on the GoT to resign.